

THE NEW RAMBLER



JOURNAL OF
THE JOHNSON SOCIETY OF LONDON

1981 ISSUE

The New Rambler

JOURNAL OF THE JOHNSON SOCIETY OF LONDON

Editor: James H. Leicester MA

Albany, Shoreham Road, Otford, Kent TN14 5RL

Serial C No. XXII

1981

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NOTHING OF THE BEAR BUT HIS SKIN*

Helen Forsyth.

Samuel Johnson has been so well painted and portrayed that we all have a mental image of him. We are aware of the burly figure, the commanding face and the resonant voice. We know, too, many of his foibles and fancies, his fear of death, his love of children, his strong moral teaching and his deep compassion. To some of us he is a great poet, to others a great club man, a telling debater and victorious talker, who also compiled the English Dictionary.

But today I wish to speak of an aspect of his nature which has seldom received just homage. In nothing of the bear but his skin I shall hope to show that Johnson's roughness of manner was very superficial and that he possessed a sensitivity and nobility of thought and feeling that have never been excelled and only equalled by Shakespeare himself.

I shall not hesitate to show both sides of the coin, nor to pretend that the skin is not a very large part of the animal, but Johnson's acerbity was often justified by the circumstances in which it took place. Johnson not only didn't suffer fools gladly, he didn't suffer them at all, and when Mrs. Knowles supported Jenny Harry in her contention that Quakerism was the only true Christianity, Johnson, who had snubbed Jenny in the street when she greeted him, replied - "Madam, I am not fond of meeting fools anywhere; they are detestable company, and while it is in my power to avoid conversing with them, I shall certainly exert that power." Boswell said that "his forcible spirit and impetuosity of manner spared neither sex nor age, but considered that pliability of address was inconsistent with Johnson's majestic power of mind, which produced such noble effects. A lofty oak will not bend like a willow, he added."¹ As Arthur Murphy admitted - "Whenever he thought contention was for superiority, he was known to break out with violence, and even ferocity. When the fray was over, he generally softened into repentance, and, by conciliating measures, took care that no animosity should be left rankling in the breast of his antagonist."² However frightening Johnson may have appeared on a first encounter, he soon won the hearts of those who grew to know him. "When you see him first," said Donald McLeod, "you are struck with awful reverence, then you admire him, and then you love him cordially."³ But George Garrick, David's brother, was more stalwart, and called Johnson - A TREMENDOUS COMPANION - from the first time he heard him converse."⁴

* A paper read at the Johnson Society of London Meeting on 21st March 1981.
Chairman: The Rev. F.M. Hodgess Roper

Johnson said of himself - "I am not uncandid, nor severe; I sometimes say more than I mean, in jest, and people are apt to think me serious. I look upon myself to be a man much misunderstood."⁵ And when Mrs. Thrale complained, "When you are angry, who dares make speeches so bitter and cruel," Johnson replied - "Madam, I am always sorry when I make bitter speeches, and I never do it, but when I am insufferably vexed."⁶

When I am musing alone," he said, "I feel a pang for every moment that any human being has by my peevishness or obstinacy spent in uneasiness," and, as Professor Clifford remarks - "The trouble so often is that only Johnson's rudeness, what obviously startled at the time, is remembered, and not his accompanying act of conciliation." "How many times, with tears in his eyes," Hawkins tells us, Johnson would apologise to those whom he had offended by contradiction or roughness of behaviour."⁸ Let me give two lighter examples of this bear we love so much.

"Once when musing over the fire in the drawing-room at Streatham, a young gentleman (Mr. Thrale's nephew, later to become Sir John Lade) called to him suddenly, and what he must have thought disrespectfully, "Mr. Johnson, would you advise me to marry?" "I would advise no man to marry, Sir," Johnson replied in an angry tone, "who is not likely to propagate understanding," and so left the room. The young man look confounded and had scarce recovered himself, when Johnson came back and, drawing a chair among the company, with altered looks and a softened voice, joined in the general chat, insensibly led the conversation to the subject of marriage, where he laid himself out in a dissertation so useful, so elegant, so founded on the true knowledge of human life, and so adorned with beauty of sentiment, that no one ever recollected the offence, except to rejoice in its consequences."⁹

But Johnson's first angry retort is not without justification, as subsequent events proved, for Sir John Lade, according to Mr. Hayward, married a woman of the town and contrived to waste the whole of a fine fortune before he died. In sixteen years he let £200,000 slip through his fingers.

"A young fellow asked him abruptly one day - "Pray, Sir, what and where is Palmira? I heard somebody talk last night of the ruins of Palmira." "'Tis a hill in Ireland," replied Johnson, "with palms growing on the top, and a bog at the bottom, so they call it Palm - mira." Seeing, however, that the lad thought him serious, and thanked him for the information, he undeceived him very gently indeed; told him the history, geography and chronology of Tadmor in the wilderness, with every incident that literature could furnish, or eloquence express, from the building of Solomon's Palace to the voyage of Dawkins and Wood."¹⁰ When Horace Walpole read of this anecdote, he wrote to a friend about Johnson - "The poor man is to be pitied: he was mad, and his disciples

did not find it out, but have unveiled all his defects; nay, have exhibited all his brutalities as wit, and his lowest conundrums as humour. Judge! The Piozzi relates that, a young man asking him where Palmyra was, he replied - "In Ireland: it was a bog planted with palm trees.... What will posterity think of us when it reads what an idol we adored?"¹¹

This reaction illustrates exactly what Professor Clifford meant about the rudeness being remembered and the charming conciliation being forgotten. Walpole, who disliked Johnson, deliberately left it out, but even Johnson's initial remark, without the amendment, is as much a tease as a rebuke for ignorance. People quoting Johnson out of context built much misunderstanding about him. Another who could not abide Johnson was the poet, Thomas Gray, and one day when he was walking with his friend in Oxford and saw Johnson lumbering before him, "Look, look, Bonsetton," he cried, "the Great Bear. There goes Ursa Major!" "Ah," said Goldsmith, when this was repeated to him, "They may say that. Johnson to be sure has a roughness of manner, but no man alive has a more tender heart. He has nothing of the bear but his skin." And no one knew this better than Goldsmith when the bailiffs were at his door.

"I received one morning," said Johnson, "a message from poor Goldsmith that he was in great distress, and, as it was not in his power to come to me, begging that I would come to him as soon as possible. I sent him a guinea, and promised to come to him directly. I accordingly went as soon as I was dressed, and found that his landlady had arrested him for his rent, at which he was in a violent passion. I perceived that he had already changed my guinea, and had got a bottle of Madeira and a glass before him. I put the cork into the bottle, desired he would be calm, and began to talk to him of the means by which he might be extricated. He then told me that he had a novel ready for the press, which he produced to me. I looked into it, and saw its merits; told the landlady I should soon return, and, having gone to the bookseller, sold it for sixty pounds. I brought Goldsmith the money and he discharged his rent, not without rating his landlady in a high tone for having used him so ill."¹² Who better to answer distress with compassion and wisdom than Samuel Johnson? He didn't reproach the penniless Goldsmith for having made a bottle of wine his first purchase, but wisely put the cork in the bottle, went to a bookseller with the script of "The Vicar of Wakefield" and returned with a much-needed sixty pounds. But there is an even more touching instance of Goldsmith's absolute trust in Johnson's kindness and understanding. John Forster tells it beautifully in his book - Oliver Goldsmith. "When his play, The Good-Natured Man was ill-received and only saved by Shuter's reading of the "incendiary letter" with such inimitable humour that it carried the fifth Act through, Goldsmith gave no indication of the distress he had suffered when he joined his friends at Gerrard Street.

The members might have seen that he ate no supper, but he chatted gaily as if nothing had happened amiss. He even sang his favourite song, which he never consented to sing but on special occasions, about The Old Woman Tossed Up In A Blanket, 17 Times as High as the Moon, but afterwards when he and Johnson were dining with Percy at the Chaplain's table at St. James's, he confessed what his feeling had really been and when all were gone except Johnson, he burst out crying and swore that he would never write again. Goldsmith never flung himself in vain on that great, rough, tender heart. The weakness he did his best to conceal from even the kindly Langton, from the humane and generous Reynolds, was sobbed out freely there. And it is not difficult to guess how Johnson comforted him from remarks he made to Boswell at Oxford a month or two later, when Boswell talked slightly of The Good-Natured Man. "Sir, it is the best comedy that has appeared since The Provoked Husband. There has not been of late any such character exhibited on the stage as that of Croaker." Who can doubt that Goldsmith had words of assurance at the least as kindly as these to listen to as he walked home that night from Gerrard Street with Samuel Johnson?"¹³

But surely Johnson's greatest kindness to Goldsmith was after his death? I do not refer to the dignified epitaph he wrote for him, impressive as that is, but to his magnificent response when, some days after the funeral, Johnson entered a room where Goldy and all his shortcomings were being discussed. With one sentence he silenced all censure. "Let not his frailties be remembered. He was a very great man."

"Let not his frailties be remembered," Johnson implores. "Speak me fair in death," pleads Shakespeare's Antonio.

Shakespeare and Johnson, both fair and fine in their conception of friendship.

"From his earliest years," Boswell tells us, "his superiority was perceived and acknowledged. He was, from the beginning, a king of men."¹⁴ And there is no doubt whatever that Johnson was aware of this superiority and took great pride in it, but it was always balanced by a true humility and even gentleness before correction.

"I am happy to mention" said Boswell, "a pleasing instance of his enduring, with great gentleness, to hear one of his most striking peculiarities pointed out. Miss Hunter, a niece of his friend Christopher Smart, when a very young girl, struck by his extraordinary motions, said to him - "Pray, Dr. Johnson, why do you make such strange gestures?" "From bad habit," he replied,¹⁵ "Do you, my dear, take care to guard against bad habits."

Johnson was always kind to children and that in an age when children were very strictly brought up and even severely punished for minor faults. "Johnson was exceedingly disposed to the general indulgence of children," Mrs. Piozzi wrote in her Anecdotes, "and was even scrupulously and ceremoniously attentive not to offend them."¹⁶ Johnson never talked down to children, he treated them with respect and his letters to them are so charming and tender that it makes one sad that he had no child of his own. Psychologically, Johnson was well before his time in realising the harm that competition between siblings could produce and he was sensible in other ways too, for when Boswell teased him with what he would do if left alone with a new-born baby, he said he would wash it in warm water to please it and not in cold water to upset it, as opposed to Mrs. Thrale who advocated cold baths and the frequent use of the fist! Johnson said he dearly loved a knot of little misses, and on his nocturnal ramblings he would slip pennies into the hands of sleeping children so that they could buy something for breakfast when they woke, and at a time when children's books were over-sanctified, like Little Goody Two-Shoes, he said that babies did not want to hear about babies, but about giants and things to stretch their little minds. In an age when children were very much to be seen and not heard, Johnson was their champion and friend.

Johnson possessed the rare combination of both physical and moral courage and would always admit when he was in the wrong, even before an important assembly of people. "Miss Johnson, one of Sir Joshua's nieces, was dining one day at her uncle's with Dr. Johnson and a large party; the conversation, happening to turn on music, Johnson spoke very contemptuously of that art, and added - "That no man of talent, or whose mind was capable of better things, ever would or could devote his time and attention to so idle and frivolous a pursuit." The young lady, who was very fond of music, whispered to her next neighbour - "I wonder what Dr. Johnson thinks of King David?" Johnson overheard her, and, with great good humour and complacency, said - "Madam, I thank you. I stand rebuked before you, and promise that, on one subject at least, you shall never hear me talk nonsense again."¹⁷

During Johnson's absence in Scotland, Tom Davies published two volumes entitled - Miscellaneous and Fugitive Pieces - which he advertised in the newspapers as by the author of The Rambler. "How", said Johnson, "would Pope have raved had he been served so? We should never have heard the end of it, but then Pope was a narrow man. I will storm and bluster myself a little time," and he went to London with all the wrath he could muster. On his return, Mrs. Thrale asked him how the affair ended. "Well", said he, "I was a fierce fellow, and pretended to be very angry, and Thomas was a good-natured fellow, and pretended to be very sorry; so there the matter ended. I believe the dog loves me dearly."¹⁸

Nothing is more vexing to an author than to have his work published without his permission or his authority as to which pieces are published, but Johnson's love was stronger than his anger and he forgave his friend. About this time Tom Davies's fortunes failed, but Johnson's friendship did not. The Rev. John Hussey wrote as follows - "About this time I met poor Davies in the street, and enquiring earnestly after our common friend, Dr. Johnson, for I had been absent from Town four months, Davies burst into tears and replied - "God for ever bless him. I am beholden to that good man for the bread I eat and the bed I lie on."

Johnson hated all forms of boasting or showing-off and when a young man lamented that he had lost all his Greek, "I believe it happened at the same time, Sir," he replied, "that I lost all my large estate in Yorkshire!" "But however roughly he might be suddenly provoked to treat a harmless exertion of vanity," said Mrs. Thrale, "he did not wish to inflict the pain he gave, and was sometimes very sorry when he perceived the people to smart more than they deserved."

"Were I to write the Life of Dr. Johnson said Reynolds, "I would labour the point, to separate his conduct that proceeded from his passions, and what proceeded from his reason, from his natural disposition seen in his quiet hours."¹⁹

And Boswell, commenting on Johnson's verbal castigation said - "Dr. Johnson's harsh attacks on his friends arise from uneasiness within. There is an insurrection abroad. His loud explosions are guns of distress." We all know the mental and physical disabilities under which Johnson laboured throughout his life and which he, in general, so manfully overcame, but it is not surprising that on occasion, when his resistance was low, that he gave a harsh answer. Johnson himself said that his acknowledged severity had one good result, which was to repress obscenity and blasphemy in his presence. Also Johnson's reproofs were mainly either to correct or amend, and an amusing incident in this direction is reported by Mrs. Thrale.

"A lady little accustomed to contradiction, who had dressed herself for church at Streatham one Sunday morning, in a manner he did not approve, and to whom he said such sharp and pungent things concerning her hat, her gown, etc. that she hastened to change them, and, returning quite another figure, received his applause, thanked him for his reproofs, much to the amazement of her husband, who could scarcely believe his own ears."²⁰ Most people maintained a stunned silence after one of Johnson's stern rebukes, but on one occasion when Johnson got as good as he gave, he accepted the reprimand.

"Dr. Johnson called one morning on Mr. West, the painter, to converse with him on American affairs. After some time Mr. West said that he had a young American (Gilbert Stuart) living with him, from whom he might derive some information, and introduced Stuart. The conversation continued (Stuart being thus invited to take part in it), when the Doctor observed to Mr. West that the young man spoke very good English; and turning to Stuart rudely asked him where he had learned it. Stuart very promptly replied - "Sir, I can better tell you where I did not learn it - it was not from your Dictionary."²¹ Johnson seemed aware of his own abruptness, and was not offended."

"Once during a dinner while Dr. Samuel Musgrave was holding forth very agreeably on some subject, Johnson suddenly interrupted him with - "Sir, you talk like a fool." A dead silence ensued, and Johnson, perceiving that his rude speech had occasioned it, turned to Musgrave and said - "Sir, I have hurt your feelings." "Dr. Johnson," replied Musgrave, "I feel only for you."²² In this encounter the victory must be allowed to Dr. Musgrave! Great emphasis has been placed on Johnson's many admonitory remarks about Garrick, but personally I have never forgiven Garrick for his prurient curiosity at Edial and his even lower behaviour in later life when he gave "displays" of what he purported was Johnson's love approach to Tetty, knowing full well that Johnson was at his height as the greatest man of his century, one of the greatest Christians of all time and a literary and intellectual colossus. No one wishes their most private moments spied upon, still less acted out as entertainment for others. And there would seem to be some chance that Johnson knew about Garrick's antics in his direction, or at least suspected them, for it was Garrick's habit in company, with Johnson present, to take him off by squeezing a lemon into a punch bowl with exaggerated gestures and crying out in a Staffordshire accent - "Who's for poonsh?" The newspapers of the day were far from reticent and Garrick's private acting may well have been reported or suggested. With a background like this, Johnson's occasional acerbity when speaking of Garrick is well explained and certainly justified. Incidentally, it is worth noting here that Garrick greatly exaggerated Johnson's provincial accent. Hawkins tells us that Ulinish, after hearing Johnson talk, said - "It is music to hear this man speak," and many were of the same opinion. But so kind was this bear's great heart that when, after Garrick's death, there was a vacancy at The Turk's Head Club, with many candidates ready and more than willing to be elected to succeed him, Johnson would listen to none. "No", he said, "there could never be found any successor worthy of such a man", and he insisted upon it that there should be a year's widowhood in The Club before they thought of a new election."²⁴

We all know Johnson's remark that Garrick's death eclipsed the gaiety of nations, but quite as beautiful is his short letter to Mrs. Garrick on the death of her husband.

"Dr. Johnson sends most respectful condolence to Mrs. Garrick, and wishes that any endeavour of his could enable her to support a loss which the world cannot repair."

Johnson's passionate love of truth and his hatred of hypocrisy was often the foundation of his rudeness as the following incident illustrates. "Once, when a man dining with him, laughed immoderately at everything Johnson said, thinking to court and flatter him, Johnson turned on him and said - "Pray, Sir, what is the matter? I hope I have not said anything that you can comprehend!"

In general, as Sir Joshua Reynolds maintained, Johnson was the first to seek a reconciliation, to express his sorrow for what had happened and to promise to "make it up in twenty different ways." Usually this love and repentance succeeded, but not always. "When Johnson heard about Sheridan's pension, he blurted out - "What, have they given him a pension? Then it is time for me to give up mine!" Then realising how unfair he had been, he added, "However, I am glad that Mr. Sheridan has a pension for he is a very good man." Unfortunately, Sheridan heard about Johnson's explosion and never forgave him. From that time on he refused ever to visit Johnson or to have any further association with him. His resentment could not be assuaged, even though Johnson tried in vain to restore their friendship. Johnson knew how to forgive rude explosions, but others found it more difficult."²⁵

Someone with so unique and singular a personality as Johnson could not hope to go unremarked by the journalists of the 18th century. In the St. James's Chronicle of January 15th, 1763, there was a poem to "Classicus - A Literary Character", which many felt to be aimed at Johnson and which showed, in four lines, the dichotomy in his personality.

"With proper pomp his Periods roll,
And his sense penetrates the soul,
But on a humerous subject - there
You see the gambols of a Bear."

And The London Magazine of 1773 carried this pen-picture.

"This gentleman has occasionally shone as a wit in the most simple and confined implication of that word. We have many of his bon mots upon record. These generally are not so brilliant as they are pointed; and perhaps they are not so frequently just as they are ill-natured. He is said to affect a singularity in his manners, and to condemn the social rules which are established in the intercourse of civil life. If this extravagance is affected, it is a fault; if it has been acquired by the habitudes of his temper, it scarcely merits censure.

We allow the man who can soar so high above the multitudes to descend sometimes beneath them." Fanny Burney in a letter to Mary Ann Pott made much the same assessment. "He was always indulgent to the young, he never attacked the unassuming, nor meant to terrify the diffident. I pretend not, however, to vindicate his temper, nor to justify his manners; but his many and essential virtues and excellences made all who were much connected with him rather grieve at his defects than resent them - grieve, indeed, to see how much remains to be pardoned, even where there is most to be applauded and admired." As Edmund Burke said - "It is well, if when a man comes to die, he has nothing heavier upon his conscience than having been a little rough in conversation."

Johnson had a very tender conscience and paid more attention to criticism than might be imagined. "Hawkins said that after Johnson's death, he found among his papers a letter by someone who knew him well. It went into details about his habit of contradiction, his lack of deference to the opinions of others, and his temptation to talk for victory. The letter was written in "a spirit of charity, with due acknowledgement of those great talents with which he was endowed, but contained in it several home-truths. In short, it was such a letter as many a one, on the receipt of it, would have destroyed. On the contrary, Johnson preserved it, and placed it in his bureau, in a situation so obvious, that, whenever he opened that repository of his papers, it might look him in the face."²⁶

Johnson was well aware of what Lord Pembroke called his bow-wow way, and never was this more charmingly acknowledged than when, surrounded by a group of the blue-stocking ladies, who were viewing him with some disquiet, he called out merrily - "Ladies, I am tame. You may stroke me!" And I hope they did for Johnson loved to be caressed.

Johnson was very attractive to many women, who were aware of his underlying chivalry, his great benevolence and his delightful wit. Mrs. Thrale said that no one paid such elegant compliments, but his compliments could be sexually charming too. During the tour of the Hebrides one of the married ladies, a pretty, lively little woman, good-humouredly sat down upon Dr. Johnson's knee, and, being encouraged by some of the company, put her hands round his neck and kissed him. "Do it again," said he, "and let us see who will tire first." This is not the response of a bear, but of a very charming man.²⁷

Beautiful Miss Graham, a relation of Lord Newhaven, asked Dr. Johnson to hob or nob with her. He was flattered by such pleasing attention and politely told her he never drank wine; but if she would drink a glass of water he was much at her service. She accepted. "Oh, ho, Sir," said Lord Newhaven, "you are caught! "Nay, I do not see how

I am caught," said Johnson, "but if I am caught I don't want to get free again. If I am caught, I hope to be kept."²⁸ Again and again Johnson demonstrated a sensitive and graceful response to difficult social situations. Margaret Boswell deeply resented her husband's love for and involvement with Johnson, and made this very plain, though when faced with the fact, she denied it. Let us listen to Johnson's letter on the subject.

"I am pleased to be told that I accused Mrs. Boswell unjustly, in supposing that she bears me ill-will. I love you so much, that I would be glad to love all that love you; and I have love²⁹ very ready for Mrs. Boswell, if she thinks it worthy of acceptance." Here is Johnson taking all the blame on himself in an act of deliberate and delightful homage.

"When I went into Dr. Johnson's room this morning," said Boswell, I observed to him how wonderfully courteous he had been at Inveraray and said - "You were quite a fine gentleman, when with the Duchess (Argyle). He answered in good humour - "Sir, I look upon myself as a very polite man."³⁰ "And he was right," said Boswell, "in a proper manly sense of the word." "Theoretically," wrote Sir Walter Scott, "no man understood the rules of good breeding better than Dr. Johnson, or could act more exactly in conformity with them, when the high rank of those with whom he was in company for the time³¹ required that he should put the necessary restraint upon himself."

"As he grew accustomed to polite society at the Thrales," Murphy tells us, "Johnson saw the advantages of mutual civility and endeavoured to profit from the models he saw before him." "Every man of any education", said Johnson, "would rather be called a rascal than accused of deficiency in the graces," and Mrs. Thrale assures us that no one was, indeed, "so attentive not to offend nor so careful to maintain the ceremonies of life as Johnson." Johnson hated the way of leaving a company without giving notice to the lady of the house that he was going and he had a settled reverence for the long-received customs of life.

"It is very certain," wrote Frances Reynolds, "that Johnson piqued himself much upon his knowledge of the rules of true politeness, and particularly on his most punctilious observances of them towards the ladies. A remarkable instance of this was his never suffering any lady to walk from his house to her carriage through Bolt Court, unattended by himself to hand her into it, and if any obstacle prevented it from driving off, there he would stand by the door of it and gather a mob about him."³²

Johnson was disgusted whenever he met with coarse manners and said to Boswell during the Tour — "I don't know how it is, but I cannot bear low life; and I find others, who have as good a right as I to be fastidious, bear it better, by having mixed more with different sorts of men. You would think that I have mixed pretty well too."³³ Johnson had mixed pretty well, but quite obviously he had a more innate delicacy than those with whom he compared himself, and Dr. Barnard, the Provost of Eton College, realised this, for of this man Johnson told Mrs. Thrale — "He was the only man who did justice to my good breeding; and you may observe that I am well-bred to a degree of needles scrupulosity. No man, no man, is so cautious not to interrupt another; no man thinks it so necessary to appear attentive when others are speaking; no man so steadily refuses preference to himself, or so willingly bestows it on another, as I do; nobody holds so strongly as I do the necessity of ceremony, the ill-effects which follow the breach of it; yet people think me rude, but Barnard did me justice."³⁴

One who thought Johnson rude was Lord Chesterfield, who, in writing to his son, said of Johnson: "Inattentive to all the regards of social life, he mistimes or misplaces everything. He disputes with heat and indiscriminately, mindless of the rank, character and situation of those with whom he disputes; absolutely ignorant of the several gradations of familiarity and respect, he is exactly the same to his superiors, his equals and his inferiors, and therefore, by a necessary consequence, absurd to two of the three. Is it possible to love such a man? No. The utmost I can do for him is, to consider him a respectable Hottentot."³⁵

What greater proof of courtesy or breeding could we demand than a man who was "exactly the same to his superiors, his equals and his inferiors?" It was Johnson's high distinction that he was himself in all company.

Although Johnson was careless in his dress until Henry Thrale took him in hand, he was fastidious enough to object to having lumps of sugar put into his cup by another's fingers, instead of the tongs, and he did not like to see a handkerchief used at meals. If he had a cold, Johnson would leave the table, turn his back and blow his nose at some distance from those dining.

Johnson well understood the smart of dependance and although he returned every Saturday to those he was sheltering in his house, so that they might have three good dinners before he went back to Streatham on Monday, Mrs. Thrale tells us that he treated them with the same, or perhaps more ceremonious civility, than he would have done by as many people of fashion. Surely this was a true delicacy and one not commonly practised in that or any age? "His humanity and generosity, in proportion to his slender income, were unbounded," said Arthur Murphy, but Johnson's kindness also extended to the animal kingdom.

"I shall never forget," said Boswell, "the indulgence with which he treated Hodge, his cat; for whom, he, himself, used to go out and buy oysters, lest the servants having that trouble should take a dislike to the poor creature, and once Johnson chid his wife for beating the cat before the maid, who will now, he said, treat puss with cruelty perhaps, and plead her mistress's example." Tyler relates that Johnson would not sit at a table where a lobster, which had been roasted alive, was one of the dishes.³⁶ But it is in attacking vivisection that Johnson's kindness and nobility fuse into terrible sentences. "Among the inferior professors of medical knowledge, is a race of wretches, whose lives are only varied by varieties of cruelty; whose favourite amusement is to nail dogs to tables and open them alive; to try how long life may be continued in various degrees of mutilation, or with the excision or laceration of the vital parts; to examine whether burning irons are felt more acutely by the bone or the tendon; and whether the more lasting agonies are produced by poison forced into the mouth or injected into the veins. I know not, that by living dissections any discovery has been made by which a single malady is more easily cured. And if the knowledge of physiology has been somewhat increased, he surely buys his knowledge dear, who learns the use of the lacteals at the expense of his humanity."³⁷ There was no lack of the milk of human kindness in our great bear!

"Frances Reynolds tells of driving in a post chaise with Johnson past the churchyard of Wear, a village three miles from Torrington, just off the road to Bideford, where she had seen a striking monument put up by a widowed mother over the grave of her only child. As she was relating the tale, with a multitude of melancholy circumstances, she heard her companion sobbing and saw tears in his eyes. Much affected by the experience, Frances described the whole incident in a long poem entitled - A Melancholy Tale, which some yeags later Johnson corrected, still much moved by the sentimental story."³⁸ "Such was his sensibility," said Boswell, "and so much was he affected by pathetic poetry, that, when he was reading Dr. Beattie's Hermit in my presence, it brought tears into his eyes."³⁹

Johnson was kind in so many different ways. When he first came to London he used to eat at a tavern called The Pine Apple, where he got a good dinner for eight pence a day. "I had a cut of meat for sixpence and bread for a penny, and gave the waiter a penny, so that I was quite well served, nay, better than the rest, for they gave the waiter nothing." We must not forget at this time that Johnson was very poor indeed, but had the good manners and generosity to think of the waiter.

Sir John Hawkins was impressed by the fact that when Johnson was sending one of his amanuenses, Peyton, on an errand, he would take care not to make him feel degraded or belittled by the command, and it is to be remembered that Johnson buried both Peyton and his wife when they were reduced to penury. Johnson was well aware of his occasional

arrogance. "Sir," he said to Warton, "I am not used to be contradicted," and he admitted that it did a man good to be talked to by his Sovereign, because in the first place a man cannot be in a passion. That Johnson could keep his passion under control and could recover from a joke against himself, and even enlarge upon it, is shown by the following episode.

"I ventured to mention," said Boswell, "a ludicrous paragraph in the newspapers, that Dr. Johnson was learning to dance of Vestris. Lord Charlemont, wishing to excite him to talk, proposed in a whisper, that he should be asked whether it was true or not. "Shall I ask him?" said his Lordship. We were, by a great majority, clear for the experiment. Upon which his Lordship very gravely, and with a courteous air, said - "Pray, Sir, is it true that you are taking lessons of Vestris?" This was risking a good deal, and required the boldness of a General of Irish Volunteers to make the attempt. Johnson was at first startled, and in some heat answered - "How can your Lordship ask so simple a question?" But immediately recovering himself, whether from unwillingness to be deceived, or to appear deceived, or whether from real good humour, he kept up the joke. "Nay, but if anybody were to answer the paragraph and contradict it, I'd have a reply and would say that he who contradicted it was no friend either of Vestris or me. For why should not Dr. Johnson add to his other powers a little corporeal agility? Socrates learned to dance at an advanced age, and Cato learned Greek at an advanced age. Then it might proceed to say that this Johnson, not content with dancing on the ground, might dance on the rope; and they might introduce the elephant dancing on the rope."⁴⁰

Although Johnson was the recipient of almost daily proof of admiration, which he must have realised was truly deserved, his divine commonsense kept him from getting vain. Dr. Burney gives a lovely instance of this. "One day he related to Dr. Johnson the partiality which his writings had excited in a friend of his, a Mr. Bewley, well-known in Norfolk by the name of Philosopher of Massingham, who, from the Ramblers and the Plan of the Dictionary, and long before the author's fame was established by the Dictionary itself, or any other work, had conceived such a reverence for him, that he earnestly begged Dr. Burney to give him the cover of the first letter he had received from him, as a relic of so estimable a writer. This was in 1755. In 1760, when Dr. Burney visited Dr. Johnson at the Temple in London, where he then had chambers, he happened to arrive there before Johnson was up, and being shown into the room where he was to breakfast, finding himself alone, he examined the contents of the apartment, to try whether he could, undiscovered, steal anything to send to his friend Bewley, as a relic of the admirable Dr. Johnson. But finding nothing better to his purpose, he cut some bristles off the hearth-broom, and enclosed them in a letter to his country enthusiast, who received them with due reverence. The Doctor was so sensible of the honour done him by a man of genius and science, to whom

he was an utter stranger, that he said to Dr. Burney - "Sir, there is no man possessed of the smallest portion of modesty, but must be flattered with the admiration of such a man. I⁴¹ give him a set of my Lives if he will do me the honour to accept them." Johnson matched true humility with true humility and love with love.

As the compiler of the Dictionary, Johnson used words accurately and with all their intrinsic force, but surely he never used them more beautifully than when, in conversation with his old college friend Edwards, he asked him if from having practised the Law long, he had become rich. "No, Sir," said Edwards, "I got a good deal of money, but I had a number of poor relations, to whom I gave a great part of it." "Sir," said Johnson, "you have been rich in the most valuable sense of that word."

Johnson admitted that he talked for victory, but he also confessed that the happiest conversation was where there was no competition, no vanity, but a calm quiet interchange of sentiments. Professor Walter Raleigh, whose magnificent lectures on Johnson prove how well he loved and understood him, wrote - "All his dialectic dropped from him when he found himself alone, or in the presence of a single intimate. We come to closer quarters with Johnson in the best pages of The Rambler than in the most brilliant conversations recalled by Boswell. The hero of a hundred fights puts off his armour, and becomes a wise and tender confessor."⁴²

And in ending I want to show my hero without his armour, writing either in letters or in his essays thoughts that reach sublimity. When Boswell was studying in Utrecht, he sent a letter complaining that Johnson had not written to him. This is Johnson's reply. "You are not to think yourself forgotten or criminally neglected that you have had yet no letter from me. I love to see my friends, to hear from them, to talk to them, and to talk of them; but it is not without a considerable effort of resolution that I prevail upon myself to write. I would not, however, gratify my own indolence by the omission of any important duty, or any office of real kindness.

To tell you I am or am not well, that I have or have not been in the country, that I drank your health in the room that we sat last together, and that your acquaintance continue to speak of you with their former kindness, topics with which those letters are commonly filled, which are written only for the sake of writing, I seldom shall think worth communicating; but if I can have it in my power to calm any harassing disquiet, to excite any virtuous desire, to rectify any important opinion or fortify any generous resolution, you need not doubt that I shall at least wish to prefer the pleasure of gratifying a friend much less esteemed than yourself, before the gloomy calm of idle vacancy."⁴³

If Johnson had it in his power to calm any harassing disquiet, to excite any virtuous desire, to rectify any important opinion or fortify any generous resolution, nothing would stand in his way! What wonderful words they are and what a great and what a compassionate man they reveal.

Johnson said, and said rightly, that it was the duty of an author to improve the world, and not to confound the colours of right and wrong, and instead of helping to settle their boundaries, mix them with so much art that no common mind is able to disunite them.

"Vice," said Johnson, "should always disgust nor should the graces of gaiety, or the dignity of courage be so united with it, as to reconcile it to the mind. Wherever vice appears it should raise hatred by the malignity of its practices and contempt by the meanness of its stratagems. It is therefore to be steadily inculcated, that virtue is the highest proof of understanding and the only solid basis of greatness, and that vice is the natural consequence of narrow thoughts, that it begins in mistake, and ends in ignominy."⁴⁴

"Virtue is the highest proof of understanding." What a profound and powerful truth, fit to stand beside Shakespeare's great line on mercy - "'Tis mightiest in the mightiest."

And surely mercy was at its mightiest when Johnson, taxed with why he continued to support a houseful of quarrelling people, said with divine forbearance - "If I turned them out, who would receive them?"

I hope that in my paper I have shown that Johnson had nothing of the bear but his skin and that - in the words of one of his Highland hosts - "Dr. Johnson is an honour to mankind."

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3. Sir John Hawkins - Life of Samuel Johnson, LL.D. - p.224
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5. Ibid., - p.357
6. Hugh Kingsmill - Johnson Without Boswell - p.202
7. James L. Clifford - Dictionary Johnson - p.285
8. W. Jackson Bate - Samuel Johnson - p.587
9. Mrs. Piozzi - Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson - p.213
10. Ibid., - p.212
11. Horace Walpole - Letters, ix.48
12. John Forster - Life and Times of Oliver Goldsmith - p.205
13. Ibid., - p.297
14. Boswell's - The Life of Samuel Johnson (abridged). - p.9
15. Ibid., - p.388
16. Mrs. Piozzi - Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson - p.159
17. Hugh Kingsmill - Johnson Without Boswell - p.187
18. Mrs. Piozzi - Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson - p.184
19. Leslie & Taylor - Reynolds - p.246
20. Mrs. Piozzi - Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson - p.337

21. Hugh Kingsmill - Johnson Without Boswell - p.187
22. Christopher Hibbert - The Personal History of Samuel Johnson - p.326
23. Sir John Hawkins - Life of Samuel Johnson, LL.D. - p.200
24. Hugh Kingsmill - Johnson Without Boswell - p.229
25. James L. Clifford - Dictionary Johnson - p.298
26. W. Jackson Bate - Samuel Johnson - p.587
27. Sir John Hawkins - Life of Samuel Johnson, LL.D. - p.215
28. Boswell's - The Life of Samuel Johnson (abridged) - p.340
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31. Sir Walter Scott - Scott's Miscellaneous Works - p.268
32. Hugh Kingsmill - Johnson Without Boswell - p.118
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34. Mrs. Piozzi - Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson - p.168
35. Arthur Murphy - The Life and Genius of Samuel Johnson, LL.D. - p.384
36. C.E. Vulliamy - Ursa Major - p.157
37. The Idler - No. 17, 5th August 1758
38. James L. Clifford - Dictionary Johnson - p.285
39. Boswell's - The Life of Samuel Johnson (Abridged) - p.389
40. Ibid., - p.363
41. Ibid., - p.376
42. Walter Raleigh - Six Essays on Johnson - p.56
43. Bertrand H. Bronson - Samuel Johnson - p.6
44. Rambler - No. 4, March 31st 1750.

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4. Dictionary Johnson, James L. Clifford, McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, 1979.
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ANNUAL COMMEMORATION 1981

The Annual Commemoration was held on Saturday 19th December, at Westminster Abbey, by courtesy of the Dean and Chapter. The service at Johnson's graveside in Poets' Corner was conducted by the Dean. A wreath was laid on behalf of the Johnson Society of London by Dr. J.D. Fleeman, Librarian of Pembroke College Oxford - Johnson's own College. The Commemoration Address is given below.

Following the Commemoration, the Society held its Christmas Luncheon arranged by Mrs. Dowdeswell, to whom our thanks are due. Among those present whom members were glad to welcome were the President's wife and daughter, Mrs. and Miss Carpenter, the speaker, Dr. Fleeman and Mrs. Fleeman, and the Rev. Leslie Whiteside - the retiring Rector of St. Edmund the King, to whom the Society owes so much for making the Vestry Hall available for our meetings.

THE COMMEMORATIVE ADDRESS

Dr. J.D. Fleeman MA

'To abstract the mind from all local emotion would be impossible if it were endeavoured, and would be foolish if it were possible. Whatever makes the past, the distant, or the future predominate over the present, advances us in the dignity of thinking beings.'

Johnson's own response to the ruins of Iona is a suitable one for us today. As we stand by his grave, we stand where he once stood, indeed, where he once stood in the company of him whose epitaph we see over the doorway there. Forsitan et nostrum nomen miscebitur istis said he to Goldsmith, and he was right about them both.

In this place we cannot abstract our minds from local emotion, and on this occasion we have no wish to try. We are for a time, part of the living witness to human merit and aspirations, symbolised by this church and these memorials, as once were others before us, and as will be others yet to come.

Johnson was ever conscious of the mutability of human life, but was not too afraid to face and eventually conquer his fears. His life and works bear eloquent testimony to his doubts and anxieties, his uncertainties and his eventual resolution.

Let us, therefore, as we pay this tribute to his memory, unite ourselves with his fears and hopes, with his fear of evil, and his hope for good; and perhaps we may be encouraged by his example to renew our own efforts to 'hold fast to that which is good'.

EDITING JOHNSON'S JOURNEY*

Dr. J.D. Fleeman MA
Pembroke College, Oxford

The problem facing the editor of Johnson's Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland, 1775, is to determine how accurate a representation of the author's intended text is that of the first and second (revised) editions. No manuscript is extant. The editor must therefore scrutinise the two printed versions in order to determine their reliability and to discover the degree of attention which Johnson paid to them. There is now sufficient evidence to show that he paid an irregular degree of attention to the correcting of the proofs of the first edition.

The lost manuscript was delivered to William Strahan, the printer, on 20th June 1774, and some proofs were read before Johnson set off for Wales on 5th July. On 6th August he corrected sheets F and G which had been posted to him, but thereafter there is no evidence that he read proofs until after his return to London on 30th September. Thenceforward his letters illuminate the progress of the work and W.B. Todd's bibliographical analysis (Studies in Bibliography, vi (1954), 247-54) gives a clear picture of the stages of production. Further study of the variations in the page-depths (number of lines per page) of the first edition reveals a significant degree of variation in the early part of the book (sigs. B-G) and the latter part (sigs. R-2B), of roughly 7 per cent, whereas the middle part (sigs. H-Q) shows a variation of less than one per cent. This middle section also contains ten of the eleven readings which Johnson corrected by means of an errata leaf in the first edition. This seems to mean that proof revision in the middle section was cursory, almost certainly performed in haste upon Johnson's return to London from his Welsh tour, whereas the early section and the last section were read more attentively. The editor will therefore be more willing to emend any errors in this middle section than he will in the two outer sections where it may be argued that Johnson himself corrected his text with greater care.

The text of the first edition bears several indications of its direct descent from the lost manuscript. Editorial emendations will necessarily be guided by the graphic features of Johnson's handwriting so that although the manuscript of the Journey is lost, the contemporary letters written to Mrs. Thrale will afford valuable guidance in the reconstruction of ambiguous words or forms which might have misled the original compositors.

Further type analysis will, it is hoped, show whether one or more compositors were involved in the setting of the type since some inconsistencies of spelling, punctuation, capitalisation and the use of italics are as yet, not clearly attributable to Johnson himself. If it appears that a

*Summary - prepared by the author - of a paper read at the Johnson Society of London Meeting on 19th December 1981.

Chairman: J.R.G. Comyn Esq.

single compositor was involved, then obviously the inconsistencies are more likely to be Johnson's and so the editor will probably retain them, but if there were several compositors then the editor must estimate the accuracy of each one before deciding which readings to change and which to keep.

It is not likely that any very considerable changes to the text will arise from this argument, but it is hoped that the editor may be able to eliminate some anomalies from the text and that this discussion will persuade his readers to accept them.

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MISS JEAN HICKLING

The 1981-82 season opened on a sad note. The Chairman asked members to stand in memory of Miss Jean Hickling who had died on 12th July. Miss Hickling joined the Society in 1969 and was a very loyal and helpful member. She served on the Committee and often assisted with the refreshments at the Meetings. We shall miss her friendly presence.

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ACADEMIC AWARDS

We are pleased to offer congratulations to one of our members of long standing —Dr. James B. Misenheimer Jr., Professor of English, Indiana State University. Dr. Misenheimer received the Marc Fitch Prize for Bibliography at a ceremony in the University of Leeds, held in May 1981. His selection for the prize awarded by the Institute of Bibliography and Textual Criticism was a unanimous choice in recognition of his work on the Annual Bibliography of English Language and Literature. He has served as American editor for 16 volumes (1965-80). The title of the address which he gave on receiving the award was: "Dr. Johnson, Warren Cordell and the Love of Books".

Dr. Misenheimer is a Past President of the Johnson Society of the Central Region in the USA. Last year he also received the Caleb Mills Distinguished Teaching Award from his own University at Indiana State, Terre Haute.

JHL



SHORT FICTION IN HAWKESWORTH'S ADVENTURER (1752-1754)

Philip Mahone Griffith
University of Tulsa

After almost a half-century of imitations in the Tatler, Spectator, and Guardian tradition, a "second efflorescence" of the single essay periodical appeared during the seventeen-fifties.¹ The most notable of periodicals and the one "usually ranked as the first of the classical periodicals after the Guardian" was Samuel Johnson's Rambler (1750-52).² The influence of the Rambler in purpose, in style, and notably in physical format was as certain as that of the Tatler. In November of 1752, for example, appeared the following advertisement: "The Rambler being finished another periodical paper has appeared, called the Adventurer. It is printed after the manner of the Rambler, and sold also at Two-pence each number, published Tuesdays and Saturdays." The Adventurer, edited by Johnson's then intimate companion, John Hawkesworth, is, unequivocally, the foster child of the Rambler. Indeed, Sir John Hawkins, who was in a position to know, stated: "The avowed end of the Adventurer, being the same with that of the Rambler, and the plan and conduct thereof so little different from it, the latter may be considered as a continuation of the former."⁴

The writers of the Adventurer used, consciously, two major literary forms: the essay and prose fiction. Prose fiction is the second major literary form used in the Adventurer. The anecdote, exemplum, and Character that appear in the essay may, as studies of human personality, resemble fiction. But these are not structurally independent narratives. Such periodical fiction is so intricately bound with discussions on morals and manners that the narratives are impaired when separated from editorial moralisings. Prose fiction, as used here, designates the structurally independent short story, appearing either in a single paper or in a serial of two to four papers.⁵ Most of the prose fiction is Hawkesworth's contribution. He had, under the mask of the Adventurer, promised from the beginning to present this kind of instructive entertainment: "He has... the power of enchantment, which he will exercise in his turn; he will sometimes crowd the scene with ideal beings, sometimes recal (sic) the past, and sometimes anticipate the future; sometimes he will transport those who put themselves under his influence to regions which no traveller has yet visited."⁶ His aim — this is true for all the fiction in the Adventurer — is didactic. "It should be," he wrote, "the principal labour of moral writers, especially of those who would instruct by fiction, the power of which is not less to do evil than good, to remove the bias which inclines the mind rather to prefer natural than moral endowments; and to represent vice with such circumstances of contempt and infamy, that the ideas may constantly recur together."

In summing up his literary labours for his "YOUNG and GAY" readers, Hawkesworth provides the critic with the best distinction between the two major kinds of fictions the Adventurer contains: "I have ... sometimes led them into the regions of fancy, and sometimes held up before them the mirror of life."⁸ These two major kinds are: 1. the Oriental tale, the fable or transmigratory narrative, the allegory, and the fairy tale, and 2. the domestic or realistic tale. There is an impressive total of forty-six papers in the Adventurer devoted to these kinds of fiction, almost one-third of the total number. Thus, out of two major classes, four separate and clearly defined kinds of narratives are used in the Adventurer: (a) the domestic or realistic tale, (b) the Oriental tale, (c) the allegorical tale and (d) the fable or transmigratory narrative. A few examples of each of the four kinds follow with brief critical commentary.

a. The Domestic Tale

The nine domestic tales occupy the largest number of papers, twenty-five.¹⁰ These are realistic short stories, sentimental and didactic by nature. Many of them are addressed in letters to the Adventurer by fictitious correspondents and are, in effect, "secret histories" of distressed persons. Some are told by the Adventurer himself as if they were real bits of news about people he knows or has heard of. These tales owe much to the periodical fiction before them. The kind of sentimental and didactic tales that Addison and, especially, Steele wrote had recently achieved popularity through the efforts of Mrs. Eliza Haywood. Besides her own novels published some years earlier, Mrs. Haywood wrote fifty-five tales during her editorship of the Female Spectator (1744-1746).¹¹ And the overwhelming influence of Samuel Richardson's novels on such fiction can scarcely be denied. Pamela had appeared in 1740, Clarissa in 1747-1748. One can often detect, as well, the strain of the romance of classical antiquity and of the popular fictions of Defoe.

¹² The story of Melissa is a useful example of this kind of short story. The Adventurer, Hawkesworth here, has received an account of the death of a lady whose "eventful history" — the words are in quotations — has been related to him "during a long and intimate acquaintance." He feels compelled to share with mankind "a series of events from which the wretched may derive comfort, and the most forlorn may be encouraged to hope; as misery is alleviated by the contemplation of yet deeper distress, and the mind fortified against despair by instances of unexpected relief." Melissa's father is the younger son of a country gentleman who, first apprenticed to a merchant, enlists as a soldier. He meets, while near London, the daughter of a gentleman, who has, because of her stepmother, become a sort of Cinderella in her father's household. They fall in love below stairs, elope, are married, and subsequently disinherited by her father.

The soldier is accompanied to the siege of Namur by his now pregnant wife who survives as laundress to a generous captain who takes pity on her. This captain is destined to become the good fairy of the tale. Her husband, meanwhile, is fatally injured in battle, and she herself dies in giving birth to a daughter, Melissa, "who was thus in the most helpless state left without father, mother, or friend, in a foreign country." A young woman, herself widowed and the mother of an infant son, takes charge of Melissa. She is nurtured by the kind captain, who retains her dead mother's few possessions, including the marriage certificate. Having returned to England, the captain sends Melissa with the certificate to her grandfather who rejects her. But one of her father's brothers, himself also disowned, cares for her until his death shortly before Melissa's thirteenth birthday. She is "now again thrown back upon the world" but rescued by her foster-father's landlord who takes her into his own family. Here she becomes a great favourite until, on her eighteenth birthday, she encounters like Moll Flanders the only son of her benefactor. He falls, of course, madly in love with her and, inflamed by desire, attempts to seduce her. Unlike Moll, however, she virtuously rejects him, thus increasing his ardour sufficiently for him to make a proposal of marriage which she rejects with the usual integrity. The father overhears only the proposal, however, immediately commands his family to depart for the country, and calling Melissa into the parlour, accuses her of an improper design on his son, and dismisses her with a bank note of fifty pounds.

"Thus was Melissa a third time, by a sudden and unexpected desertion, exposed to penury and distress." She returns her accuser's money, and, again like Moll Flanders, manages to secure work as a seamstress. Here she accidentally reads a newspaper account advertising for news of her own father, who, it turns out, had now inherited his elder brother's estate. Melissa remembers the generous captain whose own servant had brought her as an infant to England, identifies herself to him by means of her mother's marriage certificate, and is assisted by him to the recovery of her father's inheritance. Having now become a lady of means, she sets out, richly accoutered with servants in livery, to vindicate her virtue in the eyes of her lover's father. She is happily reconciled to the family and marries the son "with whom she shared many years that happiness which is the reward of virtue."

In plot structure, this story, though often dependent on accidental circumstance, has an effective triple sequence of incidents, somewhat like the three acts of a sentimental comedy, moving towards a dramatic climax which is then quickly resolved. Such devices as the identifying marriage certificate ally the story with the ancient romance. The style is simple and straightforward with little attempt to establish scenes of action in detail. In the confined space of the narrative, the characters are not, and

need not be, carefully delineated. They become the stock figures of sentimental melodrama. But the narrative moves with exciting rapidity, and the didactic point is firmly made. Hawkesworth acknowledged this didactic aim when he said of the story of Melissa in the final paper: "In the story of MELISSA, I have endeavoured to repress romantic hopes, by which the reward of laborious industry is despised; and have founded affluence and honour upon an act of generous integrity, to which few would have thought themselves obliged."¹³

b. The Oriental Tale

Broadly speaking, the period between the years 1704 and 1721, with the first English version of the Arabian Nights, forms the natural point of departure for any historical consideration of the Oriental tale in England.¹⁴ It was Addison who utilised the Oriental tale for moralistic purposes in periodical literature, and he was the first notable English writer to popularise it. The similarities between Addison's original stories in Spectator and Guardian and those of Johnson in the Rambler are patent.¹⁵ But Addison's touch is lighter than that of Johnson and of Hawkesworth and Joseph Warton, who followed Johnson in the Adventurer. There are nine Oriental tales in the Adventurer, eight of them by Hawkesworth and one by Warton.¹⁶ The simplicity of the narrative plan and characterisation and the paucity of local colour in the eleven Adventurer papers are like those of Addison. Johnson, however, took far more care to adorn his narratives with a pompously ornate language than Addison, a mannerism of style which Hawkesworth carried to extremes. When Hawkesworth alludes to "the sublimity of Eastern metaphor" in No. 130, he indicates unmistakably that pompous language was one essential in the eighteenth-century concept of the Oriental tale. In incident, also, Hawkesworth is far more fantastic than either Addison or Johnson. And his intention throughout is preeminently moral.

Hawkesworth's story of the ring of Amurath is a fair example of this kind of narrative.¹⁷ The tale begins sonorously: "AMURATH, Sultan of the East, the judge of nations, the disciple of adversity, records the wonders of his life: let those who presumptuously question the ways of PROVIDENCE, blush in silence and be wise; let the proud be humble and obtain honour; and let the sensual reform and be happy." Amurath is presented with a magic ring by the Genius (or Genie) Syndarac, who warns him that the ring, intended to mark out to him who wears it the boundaries of good and evil, will grow pale and press his finger whenever he sins. "Amurath's first advance to cruelty," as Hawkesworth points out in his own brief critical comment on this story in No. 140, "was striking a dog." He degenerates, rather too swiftly, into a cruel and sensual tyrant, vainly pursues Selima, the daughter of his vizier Alibeg, throws away the by now painful ring, and is transformed by the Genius into a "monster of the desert." Captured and cruelly abused, he finally saves the life of his keeper, and in reward for this, his first good act, is changed into a dog. In this form, entering by chance the city of lawless pleasure, he beholds the horrors of

dove, he reaches — again by chance — a hermit's cave, where he beholds Selima telling her story to the hermit. Amurath feels "the sentiments of pure affection" and, in consequence, resumes human shape. The hermit, who is the Genius, preaches a final sermon, and dismisses them to reign over Golconda. They will now be happy because they have learned to be wise and virtuous.

Unfortunately, in his desire to express a universal moral truth concerning human character or conduct, Hawkesworth's personages in this tale become mere abstractions. He did not know the secret of embodying abstract ideas in concrete types; hence his fiction lacks the beauty and universal human interest of great allegorical narratives such as Pilgrim's Progress and the Faerie Queene. The tale of Amurath is, nonetheless, an exciting one. Hawkesworth makes his own best defence of its improbability when he writes of the Oriental tale as a kind in No. 4:

When the agency of Genii and Fairies is once admitted, no event which is possible to such agents is rejected as incredible or absurd; the action of the story proceeds with regularity, the persons act upon rational principles, and such events take place as may naturally be expected from the interposition of superior intelligence and power: so that though there is not a natural, there is at least a kind of moral probability preserved, and our first concession is abundantly rewarded by the new scenes to which we are admitted, and the unbounded prospect that is thrown open before us.

This critical distinction between natural and moral probability is, in itself, impressive. But the tradition of the Oriental tale produced in this period only two English masterpieces, Johnson's Rasselas and William Beckford's Vathek.

c. The Allegorical Tale

Allegory is a treatment of a subject by personification in which the figures of the action or the things described stand for something other than themselves. The domestic and the Oriental fictions in the Adventurer, which maintain consistently a consciously complex allegorical pattern are isolated here.¹⁸ One of these papers is an allegorical letter from "TODAY" which is chiefly an extended personification without a developed narrative, but the other four are mechanically and consciously contrived allegories that support a one-to-one equivalence between the literal narrative and the symbolic meaning.

No. 24 by Hawkesworth draws an extended metaphorical parallel between an evening spent at the playhouse and the several stages of life.

It is addressed in a letter to the Adventurer from a gentleman in the country, who relates the story of his life. Being possessed of a small estate, he has led a solitary and reflective existence with reading as his chief diversion. Shakespeare is his favourite author, and he has often longed to see these plays represented in the theatre. The death of a wealthy relation makes his desire possible. He puts up at an inn in London, secures a seat at a playhouse, and, in a perfect frenzy of excitement, settles himself, after the usual confused preliminaries of waiting at a crowded door to the pit, here realistically described, to enjoy a comedy and a pantomime. The first act of the play merely stimulates his curiosity. The second act, with its greater variety of incidents, creates within him a riot of sensations, and, under the influence of complete illusion, he experiences a struggle between pleasure and pain as the action of the drama increases in momentum. During the third act, having already spent himself emotionally during the dramatic crisis and returned to reality, he suffers the personal disillusionment that loss of theatrical illusion creates. In order to recreate the illusion, he attempts during the fourth act to entertain himself by the power of his own fancy. But the fifth act finds him without interest and debilitated by having successfully predicted the inevitable conclusion of the comedy, the sudden reformation of the rake and a grand reconciliation scene. He then remains to view an extravagant and lascivious pantomime and dance and is left, before he knows it, apathetic and alone, in an empty playhouse.

Upon returning to his inn, he reflects upon the meaning of his experience. "I considered," he writes, "the evening which I had just spent as an epitome of life, and the stage as an emblem of the world." What follows is, of course, the mechanical moral application of the allegory. The interval of excitement before the curtain rises represents youth, "all ardour and expectation." In the first act he "discovers that his hopes are rather transferred to more distant objects, than fulfilled by those which are present." In the second act, the scenes growing "more busy," "his attachments to life increase in number and in strength," and he experiences an emotional crisis of temptation in which he may either abandon himself to vice or persist in virtue. The fourth and fifth acts are, like life, "wearisome in proportion as [they are] prolonged, nothing is expected with ardour, because age has been too often cheated to trust the promises of time, and because today has anticipated the enjoyment of tomorrow." The play of life is over. "The last stage, the stage of dotage remains, and this is the pantomime of life" which pleases the jaded appetite only in proportion as the images are extravagant. He now "perceives himself to be alone, he has survived his friends, and he wishes to follow them." He "drops torpid and insensible into that gulph which is deeper than the grave, and it closes over him forever."

The protagonist of this allegory, however, is permitted by his creator greater fortune than most men. He can return to the peaceful

solitude of his paternal estate and enjoy a domestic felicity, a "felicity which is pure and rational, and which is still heightened by the hope that it will be repeated tomorrow." This retirement is that "BETTER COUNTRY that is incorruptible and undefiled." The mechanical allegory concludes on the usual Hawkesworthian didactic note.

d. The Fable or Transmigratory Narrative

The two tales in the Adventurer that utilise the ancient eastern concept of metempsychosis, already noted in an Oriental fiction such as the Ring of Amurath, are difficult to categorise.¹⁹ Along with a third narrative, they closely resemble the fable since they are all three short fictions in which the actions or qualities of insects or inanimate objects are made to reflect human traits or foibles. Two of these narratives by Hawkesworth and the A writer relate the various transmigrations of a flea and a louse, respectively. Strictly speaking, they have too many loosely connected incidents to be called fables. The third by Hawkesworth, which relates the adventures of a halfpenny, is an obvious imitation of Addison's adventures of a shilling in Tatler No. 249.²⁰ Hawkesworth was well aware of the Aesopian fable as a genre since he contributed a critical paper to the Adventurer on this subject along with a short example in which he makes a clear distinction between the story or tale and the fable. The fable, he writes, "is confined to some single incident: for though a number of distinct fables may include all the topics of moral instruction, caution, and advice, which are contained in a story, yet each must be remembered by a distinct effort of the mind; and they will not recur in a series, because they have no connexion with each other."²¹ This insistence on single incident would seem to preclude our designating these three fictions as fables. But the devices of personification and of parable-like moral intent make it convenient to place them in this category. No one of the three has any particular merit as narrative. Each of them is told with considerable realism, sometimes grotesque, as in the case of the louse. Each of them, again, has a didacticism that one begins to associate with all of the prose fiction in the Adventurer. The misfortunes of a flea and a louse may help to reclaim man "from a criminal inattention to the felicity of inferior beings."²² The peregrinations of a halfpenny can make appropriate comment on the "adulteration of the copper-coin" and the "circulators of base metal."

Documentation

1. Richmond P. Bond, ed., Studies in the Early English Periodical (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1957), pp. 19-20.
2. Hugh Walker, The English Essay and Essayists (London, 1915), p.133.
3. The Monthly Review, VII (November, 1752), 373.
4. The Life of Samuel Johnson (London, 1787), p.310.

5. I am conscious of the following excellent studies: Robert D. Mayo, The English Novel in the Magazines, 1740-1815 (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1962), esp. pp. 105-117; Benjamin Boyce, "English Short Fiction in the Eighteenth Century: A Preliminary View," Studies in Short Fiction, 5 (Winter 1968), p.95-112; and Donald Kay, Short Fiction in the Spectator (University, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1975.) Mayo, Boyce, and Kay all use broader definitions of "short fiction" than I do in this paper. For example, Boyce writes: "In the present discussion, 'short fiction' includes any kind of imaginative writing about people that contains or implies action and that does not exceed in length 12,000 words" (p.97).
6. No. 1. I use the revised or "second edition" of the Adventurer, published in 1754.
7. No. 16.
8. No. 140
9. Nos. 5, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 20, 21, 22, 24, 26, 31, 32, 38, 43, 52, 54, 55, 56, 61, 64, 65, 66, 70, 72, 73, 76, 77, 78, 79, 86, 91, 103, 104, 114, 117, 118, 121, 123, 124, 125, 132, 134, 135, 136.
10. Nos. 7, 8; 12, 13, 14; 52; 54, 55, 56; 64, 65, 66, 70; 77, 78, 79; 86, 134, 135, 136; 117, 118; 123, 124, 125.
11. James Roland Hodges, "A Study of The Female Spectator (1744-1746)," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of North Carolina, 1950, p.200.
12. Nos. 7 and 8.
13. No. 140.
14. Martha Pike Conant, The Oriental Tale in England in the Eighteenth Century (New York, 1908), p.xvii.
15. Ibid., p.88. Addison's tales are the Story of Hilpa, Harpeth, and Shalum, Spectator Nos. 584, 585; and the Story of Helim and Abdallah, Guardian No. 176. Johnson's five tales are found in Rambler Nos. 38, 65, 120, 190, 204, and 205.
16. Nos. 20, 21, 22; 32; 38; 72, 73; 76; 91; 103, 104; 114; 132. Warton's tale is No. 76.
17. Nos. 20, 21, 22.
18. Nos. 11, 24, 26, 31, 61.
19. Nos. 5 and 121. Donald Kay uses the term "satirical adventure story" to classify this kind of narrative. See Short Fiction in the Spectator pp. 103-105.
20. No. 43.
21. No. 18.
22. No. 5.



BOSWELL ON THE GRAND TOUR (GERMANY AND SWITZERLAND) 1764:

BELLE EPOQUE FOR THE MAN IN SEARCH OF A CHARACTER

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The very process of reading and re-reading the same Journal by Boswell, finally with the kind of patience and full attentiveness that it requires to produce a sympathy and excitement, the astonishment and instructed delight in those glimpses of his life and mind and of life as it was then - this process of learning to read Boswell without a deflecting resentment towards the formlessness of the book, turns out to be a subject in itself. One primary fact about Boswell on the Grand Tour (Germany and Switzerland) 1764 is that it was not written for publication and so lacks the shape or sense of an arrangement of materials that we expect a literary work will provide us with. Unlike two of Boswell's previous Journals, The London Journal, written for his friend Johnstone and posted to him in instalments and its predecessor the Harvest Journal, written for his tutor Macquae, Boswell on the Grand Tour was not intended for any one reader nor for any audience. Some of the interest, of course, comes from the fact that it is a private diary, but this alone is not enough to see one through. With other texts we arrange our own reactions on the basis of (or at least the reaction is helped by) a feeling for and perception of the arrangement in a work of poetry, drama, fiction or autobiography, the last of which presents us with a life reviewed from one point in that life. But a diary just jogs along. Boswell's arrangement is merely chronological; one reads and reads and (at first!) one can get very tired of it waiting to get to Rousseau and Voltaire - the big names - all one wanted to hear about anyway. Then with Rousseau and Voltaire the arrangement continues to be chronological as before though the stunning letters Boswell writes himself to serve as introductions, the drafts of these letters, the accounts of the visits and the conversations, the letters to Temple and other friends all amplify and burst forth from that chronology.

One problem then in writing about Boswell on the Grand Tour (Germany and Switzerland) 1764 is in choosing one aspect or subject of a book divided not just into two very different parts - Boswell touring the German courts (including correspondence) and Boswell with Rousseau and Voltaire - but a book that presents in the first part such variety of experience and detail and in the second a variety of kinds of writing (e.g., the written dialogues) as well as those feats by Boswell - the amazingly successful visits and conversations with the two famous men.

In the first 191 pages for example, Boswell records in varying length something about almost all of the 43 stops he makes before Switzerland and he gives accounts of all the aristocratic courts, of many court personalities, often of the public buildings, the staff, the kind of reception he was afforded, sometimes of the conversation, the music, his clothes, the accommodations, his little adventures, his thoughts and his varied states of health. And this German Journal also holds a kind of interest just for the historical information about 18th-century life that it provides and for the special reason that Boswell (as the editor remarks in the introduction) like us "was strange to the scene, and being strange, noticed and reported on most of the details of difference in dress, food, means of travel, amusements, etiquette and the like ..."

Being then a kaleidoscope of people and places and self-reflections, it makes one wonder; is there any unity to it? Boswell simply keeps the order of the entries chronological, explaining straightforwardly each episode as it occurs; so this order does not have the same effect as does the London Journal of someone in control of a story: "plotted by Boswell himself according to principles of suspense and reversal of situation,"⁴ particularly in the Louisa episode but also the accounts of his escapades in disguise.

A clue to the unity of this journal⁵ lies, I think, in the fact that its author is himself unified and made happy because of this trip - having found a role that gives him confidence and with which he can improvise in the face of almost any set of circumstances which he meets with at a court. This role is that of the young Scots Laird (a baron in Germany) on his travels. He writes a card to the Princess of Wittenberg, then comments on it:

...'Baron Boswell, to take leave, and to return his most humble thanks for all the courtesies with which he has been honoured by His (Her) Most Serene Highness.' (I think it proper to take the title of Baron in Germany, as I have just the same right to it as the good gentry whom I see around me.) Is not this card in the true style? I am made for travelling.⁶

And in between these courts where he enjoys immensely being well received (he writes satirical verses on the court that showed no hospitality to travelling visitors of rank, and he brings up the subject of why he is so well received by Rousseau and Voltaire at the end of the volume) Boswell can "rough it" through the bad accommodations and transportation, reflecting on this image of himself, the role of the young Scots aristocrat:

... You see me now, Temple, restored to myself,
quite The Great Man. Don't laugh. I am now,
Temple, really happy

(p.33)

The role takes a while to develop partly because early in the trip Boswell is struggling to get over the effects of his gloom and shaky health from the period at Utrecht, but by September (he started near the end of June, 1764) he is flourishing as the young Scots baron, enjoying this:

I had this morning the coachman, groom and footman
of the Court with me. I gave each of 'em drink-money,
and they were humble and thankful. I have been here
like a very prince. While I drove by in my coach
the people bowed to the earth.

(p.120)

The Journal contains also certain realisations about himself that Boswell makes in the beginning months of his tour preceding these entries which show him consciously giving up the attempt to imitate others and to be himself. Some of these moments and how they relate to the forming of his role will concern us farther along.

By contrast, in the London Journal Boswell's situation was much different, and he was in a different relation to high aristocracy. The scheme to get into the guards involved an explicit desire to escape the law as a profession, and Auchinleck as a place where he thought he would be doomed to a rural existence. It involved a desire to escape having to live under the intolerable sternness and penetrating judgment of his father. That journal shows him adopting a great variety of roles, but in none of them does he utilise as a prominent fact that he is the Boswell heir. He styles himself after West Digges, the leading Edinburgh actor, in being the elegant rake, or after Macheath, hero of The Beggar's Opera (a role Digges acted) who, as a captain in the army and a spirited, genteel outlaw appealed in every capacity to Boswell in London; a role to firm the often shaky, young man of pleasure. He styles himself on Addison - the perfectly genteel, restrained but easy cosmopolitan; and on Emile, sometimes in the prose style of the journal - the little bursts of rapture and enthusiasm. Boswell adopts too the role of the true-born Old Englishman, although after one foray as such to a beefsteak house it's amusing to see him remark on the money that waiters there make on small tips - true Scots blood running unthriftilly through his veins: "Indeed, I admire the English for attending to small sums, as many smalls make a great, according to the proverb."³

When Boswell does animate the role of the Scotsman consciously in the London Journal, it is the Scots Laird full of patriotism that appeals to him, a role in which he can be passionate and impulsive, sensitive to mountains and the groves around Auchinleck and to certain romantic traditions of his country. But this role doesn't bring him to think of himself seriously with any pleasure as Boswell of Auchinleck. Usually he is more the libertine, or finding that the libertine role suits him, he is the experimenter; vain, witty, eager and hilarious within that role.

But in London he is never really confident and again by contrast, on the Grand Tour, at least through Germany and Switzerland, he seems to have come into his own. The time between London and the German Tour that he spent in Holland was apparently characterised by Boswell continuing the struggle (evident in the London Journal) "... at times almost desparately, to make himself over into West Digges, or Sir David Dalrymple, or Thomas Gray, or Samuel Johnson." The intensity of these efforts to imitate or to ratify himself by contemplating correspondences to more finished, forceful characters than his own lessens though the habit continues through the beginning of Boswell's Grand Tour:

... I had a genteel, large alcove with a pretty silk bed. I was quite happy, quite Digges, quite as if I had never felt the hand of gloom. I find that my happiness depends upon small elegancies. I am a kind of Baron Maule. I will take care to have all the elegancies of life.

(p.22)

But very soon after this he is no longer making these comparisons; a certain strain is easing. It is clear that the rebellion against the precedents of his family (Boswell a soldier?) and explicitly against the wishes of his father combined with the uncertainty of his own schemes produced a strain on him in London, which no doubt prepared him to be so struck by Johnson and the sureness in Johnson's opinions. And then the efforts to make himself into a studious and chaste moral man like Johnson must have equally been a strain at Utrecht. In addition, Boswell in London seeking a commission in the guards through the influence of a few high aristocrats, realised how humiliating it was to be thus dependent, when for months nothing came of it. He couldn't fail to sense the justness of his father's scorn (in the famous admonitory letter) expressed by one benefit Lord Auchinleck spells out of "getting into Parliament (through the Law) instead of into the Army," i.e., "having the power of conferring places, instead of going about begging one."¹⁰ And Boswell while reading the same letter also must have winced not only at his father's enormous

authority in the matter of his own future but at that unsympathetic, in a way accurate, terse definition of his son's London sojourn: "... your reelings...": "And if you were truly fixed on this plan (the Law), I would make no difficulty, when you were a little settled from your reelings, to let you go abroad for a while."¹¹

When he is abroad - travelling - the idea of studying law in Edinburgh still bothers Boswell and he seriously asks for advice about his future from his travelling companion to Berlin, the distinguished Scots Earl, Lord Marischal, now diplomat to Frederick the Great. Later he asks advice from Rousseau on the same matter, but provisionally he has accepted Lord Auchinleck's plan as he tells Temple in a letter, "for my worthy father has it quite at heart."¹²

Now though, Boswell is free to travel, Lord Marischal gives him an itinerary, and writes an influential letter home to his father on his behalf persuading him to let Boswell have more time abroad than had been originally granted. And that he is heir to Auchinleck has fully entered Boswell's consciousness:

...Pray Temple encourage me. Tell me that I shall pass many agreeable days at my ancient seat of Auchinleck; that I need not be a slave of the law, but may get into Parliament or be made a Baron of Exchequer and have really otium cum dignitate. (note: "dignified leisure" - Cicero").

(p.34)

And later on, much less tentatively, Boswell writes after viewing some cattle and pastures of the Prince at Dessau which puts him "... in the humour of being a clever farmer at Auchinleck", that:

...A Scots baron cannot do better than travel in Germany... Let him go then and visit the German courts, where he can acquire French and polite manners, and at the same time be with people who live much in the same style that he must do at home. He may thus learn to support his character with dignity, and upon his paternal estate may have the felicity of a prince.

(pp.112-113)

He is full of good spirits and enthusiasm; "Am I indeed the dull dog of Utrecht?" he asks himself on the second week of his trip. He

takes to the role of the young baron rapidly and with real inward pleasure. He drinks punch at the lodgings of a Scots privateer and "At night I was Young Boswell upon his travels..."¹³ He writes to Temple from Berlin, one month into his six months German tours:

...You see me now, Temple, quite restored to myself, quite The Great Man. Don't laugh.

I am now, Temple, really happy. I have a genteel wardrobe. I have a very clever Swiss for my servant. At seven in the morning I go to the manege and ride the great horse. At ten a French fencing master comes to me. I read an agreeable French author. I write French letters. I have health of body and cheerfulness of mind....

(p.33)

The last two conditions are particularly important in any of Boswell's positive self-estimations, as a reader of even the London Journal soon sees. But as far as external influences in this Journal, besides setting possibly one of the strongest on Boswell in his discovery of himself in the role of young aristocrat, was his friendship with the distinguished diplomat, Lord Marischal. Boswell in London shows his capacity for adopting roles to suit himself as the man of pleasure - after Lord Eglington's initiations - whereas on the Grand Tour (in Germany and Switzerland) he shows his readiness to become not necessarily like Lord Marischal but more a "man of the world" - to become instructed in manners by his experiences, enriched by his reflections. His role as a Scots baron aids this identity and process.

Lord Marischal - a Scot - was a man of the world. He was well known in France, Switzerland, Germany, Spain (where he spent twenty years), England and Scotland, and one gathers fresh, little evidences about the extent of his cosmopolitan European career, which the editors outline at the beginning of the volume, in Boswell's references to him and to letters of introduction he wrote for Boswell - he was a personal friend of Rousseau who wrote the introduction Boswell didn't use - from reference to places where he lived that Boswell visits and to people that knew him. These keep appearing to the end of the Journal.

Even though Boswell doesn't devote many pages to Lord Marischal, it is clear that he respects and admires him. And, of course, he solicits his advice, spurred by that thorn of worry over his father's desire for his legal career. This is before Boswell leaves on his own from Berlin. Lord Marischal counsels against one of Boswell's alternatives: "...if you should be sent Envoy, if you are at a place where there is nothing to do, you are idle and unhappy. If you have much to do, you

are harassed with anxiety."¹⁴ - the voice of experience. Boswell gives up the idea of being an Envoy yet his having entertained it shows things aren't always cheery and that he harbours a fear that his buoyant role may collapse in drudgery back home when he is no longer travelling. But after Lord Marischal advises that he should indeed pursue a legal profession, Boswell makes his bid for a year abroad, knowing that a letter from this man will have weight with his father.

Boswell had at this point, already done with Lord Marischal (when Boswell was away on a short visit to Berlin) what was perhaps the prototype and inspiration for what he did later with Rousseau and Voltaire - he wrote a letter requesting Lord Marischal to put the friendship on a more informal basis and this gesture was affably received. Even before this letter arrives (Boswell's arrival to Lord Marischal's residence in Potsdam precedes it) he tries in a way to charm Lord Marischal. The episode shows his need to dissolve the barriers of respect and formality which he was so triumphant in being able to dissolve later with Rousseau and Voltaire. But this one is unique in being the only disguise type adventure in this Journal and it reminds one of those earlier episodes in London. It shows too what gaieté d'esprit Lord Marischal had.

At night Macpherson and I dressed ourselves in the Highland dress, of which Macpherson had two suits ... away we went, and Scott and Burnett behind us, passed the sentinels, and went to my Lord's apartment in the palace ... (he describes a card of introduction they had written for themselves full of political double entendres). His Lordship made us welcome. We stood just within the door, bowing much. He cried, "Come in, gentlemen, come in." He advanced and immediately knew us and asked how cows sold. He took our joke in good part ...

(p.84)

The escapade is milder than the ones described in the London Journal but reminiscent of the Boswell of those days. Yet it is different in character partly since it is directed at one person. It has a quality of being within bounds, prepared, to satisfy an informed curiosity as to the effect on ... A Great Man! If Lord Marischal knew how to take this event created by a high spirited Boswell then they were connected somehow. "You see me now, Temple," he had written earlier while still journeying with Lord Marischal, "quite restored to myself, quite The Great Man..." Of course one sees that Marischal's character operating on Boswell's is part of the restorative effect. Fourteen days after they began the trip, Boswell noted about his travelling companion:

My Lord, as usual, laughed at religious gloom.
I told him he had the felicity of a sound mind, which
everybody has not. Good heaven, how fortunate is one
man above another!

(p.17)

How does Lord Marischal influence Boswell's discovery and utilisation of a baronial role? Perhaps because he simply was so totally himself and was such a traveller. But the influence and the example of Lord Marishcal's independent self-hood is received by Boswell in a new way. Boswell doesn't turn Lord Marishcal into someone to emulate as he had done with others he admired. He has several crucial self-realizations in which, for the first time, he turns to himself. In another connection, wondering about his high spirits the evening before, he writes:

...I was rather too singular. Why not? I am in reality an original character. Let me moderate and cultivate my originality. God would not have formed such a diversity of men if he had intended that they should all come to a certain standard...Let me be Boswell and render him as fine a fellow as possible....

(p.29)

Several elements, some familiar and some new, get expressed in this entry which the editors deservedly call "crucial". To begin with, these reflections are prompted by an anxiety about the adequacy of Boswell's social self and the way such doubt can flood into the serious, reflective concern over personal worth seems a Boswell characteristic - familiar to readers of any previous or subsequent journal of his. But then there is an element of new confidence, closely related to that habit of doubting: "I am in reality an original character." What is this new breath? For the word character is familiar too - it is one of Boswell's own central terms in his search for wholeness, and coherence of self and for guiding principles - character in both senses; to be a character and to have a certain character.

This entry contains something new if we remember that for a long time up to this point in his diaries (though later, too) he was convinced that admirable character was outside himself. All those roles in the London Journal are evidence for this, though some are also evidence of his exuberance at being unformed, and in the passage quoted from this Journal when he sees himself as "...quite Digges..." what is occurring is again only the momentary discovery and recognition of an interior state of mind or feeling (produced by the elegance of his chambre) that he really conceives of as the permanent medium of someone else. His life only resembles that medium in flashes. Scattered usually,

he remembers and cherishes the sense of connection with those who seem less split up, and possess force, or style, or generate truth. That sense of connection leads him to believe in the possibility of character formation.

He still believes in it here, though now Boswell is consciously deciding he has the raw materials, at least an essential one, for a character within himself. He has something - he need not strive to bring himself into conformity with those other (and they are usually admirable) forms of behaviour everywhere.

Yet the idea of formation is persistent; "Let me moderate and cultivate my originality," and the whole matter is so important to Boswell, he reaches in the next instant toward a religious, cosmic explanation, without levity; "God would not have formed such a diversity of men if he had intended that they should all come up to a certain standard..." This self-concern may strike one as a kind of complacency, particularly in view of his closing remark; "Let me then be Boswell and render him as fine a fellow as possible," and the editors seem to think so, having described the entry as one in which Boswell "contemplated with complacency the idea of being himself."¹⁵ But this new admonition to be himself contains too clearly the uneasy edge of his persistent desire to reform for it to be mere complacency and in such a light that closing remark even expresses Boswell's real interest, understated now, in a practical morality. Whenever he was around great men, Boswell unleashed this interest in the hope of learning something essential to maturity of character. With Rousseau, it took the form momentarily of handing himself over; "Will you, Sir, assume direction of me?"¹⁶ and even of giddiness; "...I shall go out from your retreat into the world with two or three simple and noble principles, and I shall be a man all the rest of my days."¹⁷ though these moments by no means characterise completely his approach to Rousseau.

This Journal shows that opposing tensions are always vying beneath the surface of Boswell's personality - insecurity and anxiety versus confidence and happiness - and on the Grand Tour the inner landscape begins to tilt up towards happiness and confidence and to the end of this Journal it remains so tilted. That important kernel of realisations about Boswell's originality of character, chanced upon in the process of consciously remembering an evening (realisations that help create the Boswell who will visit Rousseau and Voltaire in four months) leads to an even more extended reflection on the same ideas a few evenings later. Notice that the phrase Boswell of Auchinleck is embedded centrally here - the fulcrum of these thoughts:

...My mind was clear and firm and fertile. It contained in itself both male and female powers; brilliant fancies were begotten, and brilliant fancies were brought forth. I saw my error in suffering so much from the contemplation of others. I can never be them, therefore let me not vainly attempt it in imagination; therefore let me not envy the gallant and the happy, nor be shocked by the nauseous and the wretched. I must be Mr. Boswell of Auchinleck, and no other. Let me make him as perfect as possible. I think, were I such a one, I should be happy indeed; were I such another, I should be wretched indeed - without considering that were I really these people, I could not have the same ideas of their situation as I now have, for no man has of himself the notion that other people have of him, especially those who know him little....

(pp.53-4)

New and definite changes seem to be tilting the landscape away from gloom. One change that becomes more and more apparent to the reader of this Journal is that by virtue of his family position, Boswell finds he has a passport as the young Scots baron on his travels to the civilised, genteel society of any court or gentry house he visits. This is a great advantage, one that Lord Marischal knew would provide Boswell with practical experience of the world and it provides an entirely novel surface to Boswell's life - a varied and stimulating social one with the future temporarily clear in the chronology of a trip. Now on his own in Germany, Boswell moves in society. He is no longer battered by a culture in which he gets submerged - those London escapades - when he cannot manage to have himself hoisted into its ranks (with the Guards scheme). Significantly, Boswell's reflections on being Boswell of Auchinleck occurred during and were extended from an evening in Society:

... At night I was very gay at a pretty opérette. I sat in the Duke's loge and was fine with the ladies of the court. Was not this quite as I could wish? My mind was clear and firm and fertile. It contained ...etc., etc.

(p.53)

Established circles, genteel society - here Boswell has position with no hard grind; he is at play and can be constantly improvising among people and absorbing his experience of them in order to do something profoundly satisfying - to improve himself. The buoyancy and assurance that this generates in Boswell he carries with him to Rousseau and Voltaire, where he surpasses himself in efforts of self-definition

reflected both in the letters and the entries about the visits. To Madame Denis, Voltaire's niece, Boswell, in a successful attempt to lodge a night at Voltaire's, describes himself in a letter, partly explaining his witty introductory paragraphs, in this way:

I present myself in my natural character, which I find suits me the best of any. I own that I have in some periods of my life assumed the characters of others whom I admired. But, as David found the armour of Saul, I found them by much too heavy for me, and like David was embarrassed and unable to move with freedom....

(p.283)

Practice makes perfect; and if we look at an afternoon and evening in a characteristic social day we can see in the sheer number of people he meets and in the variety of activity what chance Boswell had to discover and practise what he begins to think of as "my natural character". He is at Soleure, a week before he visits Rousseau, and after touring the town he goes to dine with a Mr. Barthes. Only two thirds of this entry - about a page and a half - records these activities. Mr. Barthes is the Secretary to the French Embassy - Boswell mentioned him in the previous day's entry since he had sent him a letter of recommendation, made a visit and received an invitation to dine the next day. There at the dinner he meets the ambassador; "Monsieur Buisson de Beauteville, a tall, lean man, quite French, quite formé. He had the most finished smoothness of manners." At the same gathering Boswell finds "the Chevalier Arregger, to whom I had compliments from my Lord Marischal," engages him in conversation and hears the story of this distinguished Spanish soldier and nobleman - "He was once taken by the Algerines, and lived as a slave for five years, till they lowered his price, and his friends ransomed him." Boswell meets someone the editors conjecture is a nephew of the Chevalier Arregger - "...a genteel young man, a Genevois, Monsieur Buisson. He and I chatted a good time together." The entry very matter of factly goes on to include more people; "Arregger carried me to a party." This is at the home of a lady the editors identify as "Probably... the heroine of one of Casanova's adventures." He stays at this party "some time", then goes home to write in his journal for two hours, returns to the Ambassador's and is invited to a supper that is "... very genteel. The Ambassador was quite agreeable. Monsieur le Chevalier, his nephew and I were together." Then Boswell closes the entry with two sentences that indicate the extent to which he feels his own role - genteel, aristocrat Boswell - consonant with himself and his own private hourly energies; "I imagined myself in Paris. I have talents to appear well in that brilliant capital."¹⁸

For what Boswell was able to become in his own self-estimation the opening sentences of his drafts for his letter of recommendation to

Rousseau can serve as a kind of emblem. Boswell first wrote: "I am a good Scot. I am travelling for amusement and instruction. I write French Badly. I speak it still worse. I have come here in hope of seeing you." This became in the second draft: "I am the eldest son of a Scots gentleman of ancient family."¹⁹ The "good Scot" was changed to "eldest son of a Scots gentleman" but in the final version Boswell writes: "I am a Scots gentleman of ancient family."²⁰ He steps forth more confidently, perhaps a bit impudently ("Now you know my rank." he continues) though mere impudence is not all he has. It turns out to be quite a letter - half of it introducing Boswell, half of it paying intelligent homage to Rousseau and these two effects are mingled together with an additional awareness of the problems involved in being received without introduction, by a notoriously difficult, famous man, now ill. Not only have certain objections been anticipated and made explicit in the letter, but Boswell counters them... one has to say, with originality, marshalling the force of a powerful generalisation and elegantly:

Do you ask if I have recommendations? Surely you do not need them? In the commerce of the world a recommendation is necessary in order to protect people who lack penetration from imposters. But you, Sir, who have made such a deep study of human nature, can you be deceived in a character?...

(p.219)

Boswell's earlier phrase from the beginning of this Journal comes to mind again as Boswell presents himself here: "I am in reality an original character." That perception, born of doubt on page 29, has become a reality and apparently Rousseau, struck by such an advertisement, found it true for he wrote this in a letter of recommendation he gave Boswell to a friend in Paris:

...Dans la premiere lettre qu'il m'ecrivit il me marque qu'il etoit un homme d'un merite singulier. J'eus la curiosite de voir celui qui parloit ainsi de lui meme, et J'ai trouve qu'il m'avoit dit vrai....

(p.328)

for Boswell, as we can read, was flourishing in a personal "belle epoque".

Documentation

1. Boswell on the Grand Tour (Germany and Switzerland), 1764, ed. Frederick A. Pottle (New York, 1953). Hereafter this volume will be cited as Germany and Switzerland.

2. It is interesting to discover that though Voltaire's fame was already widely established by 1760, Casanova, whose visits to Rousseau and Voltaire in 1760 preceded Boswell's by four years, found a different Rousseau than Boswell did. He was in no need of a spiritual advisor like Boswell and saw Rousseau on a kind of social call to satisfy the fancy of Madam d'Urfé, one of his major and long time patronesses, an extremely wealthy, crazy, occultist, a lady of the French high aristocracy and willing dupe though true and constant friend of Casanova's. From the short account of their brief visit it is clear neither really sought out Rousseau for any of the reasons Boswell later did. Much can be accounted for by the great difference in Rousseau's fame between 1760 when Casanova pays him a call and 1764 when Boswell, having read purposefully for months during his German tour and having written pages in preparation, succeeded in obtaining his interviews with Rousseau, and could count this as a major triumph. In 1760 in Paris, Rousseau was working as a music copyist and had not yet published his great books. He was then only emerging and seems to have been known for his trade as much for his writing since Madame d'Urfé and Casanova on their visit took him some music, "which he copied wonderfully well." The first thing Casanova records is that "People paid him twice as much as they would have paid another copyist, but he guaranteed there would be no errors. It was the way he made his living." The two are not very impressed: "We found a man who reasoned well, whose manner was simple and modest, but who was entirely undistinguished in his person or his wit. We did not find what is called a pleasant man. We thought him rather impolite and it took no more for Madame d'Urfé to set him down as vulgar." (all quotations: History of My Life by Giacomo Casanova, trans. by Willard Trask (Harcourt & Brace, New York, 1960), Vol V, chapter 10, p.223).
3. Pottle, Frederick A.: preface to Germany and Switzerland, p.4.
4. Pottle, Frederick A.: intro to Germany and Switzerland, p.X.
5. A corroborating report of an effect of unity in quite a different connection (i.e. Boswell's restless facing of the moral question of whoring in Boswell, The Ominous Years) appears in Versions of the Self, John Morris (Basic Books Inc., New York, 1966), p.184: "...the concerns that animate a paragraph or an entry may, when they are strong, impart a sense of unity to a body of Journal."
6. Germany and Switzerland, p.119. Hereafter all page numbers after quotations will be from this text and edition.
7. e.g. p. 169: Boswell's London Journal ed. Frederick A. Pottle (New York, 1956). All references to the London Journal are to this edition (Signet paperback).
8. London Journal p.95: 14 December, 1762.
9. Germany and Switzerland, Pottle intro. p.XI.
10. London Journal, Appendix II, p.229.
11. Ibid.
12. Germany and Switzerland, p.34.
13. Ibid., p.21.
14. Ibid., p.85.
15. Ibid., p.29 note 9.

16. Ibid, p.231.
17. Ibid, p.233.
18. Ibid, p.209-10: all quotations in this paragraph are from the entry of Nov. 28, 1764.
19. Ibid, Appendix I: p. 323, and p.325.
20. Ibid, p.218.
21. The editors give an English translation of Rousseau's letter (pp.274-76):
"...In the first letter he wrote me, he told me that he was a man 'of singular merit.' I was curious to see a man who spoke of himself in such a fashion, and I found that he had told me the truth."

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A READING FROM FRANK BARBER, A PLAY IN PROGRESS

by John Wain

Chairman: Mrs. A.G. Dowdeswell.

At the February 1981 Meeting, the speaker was John Wain, Novelist and Poet, sometime Professor of Poetry at Oxford, and author of many books including an acclaimed biography of Johnson.

Mr. Wain read some scenes from a "work in progress" - a play about Frank Barber, Johnson's black servant. Frank had been born in slavery, but had become a free citizen. Having been acquired by General Bathurst, he had been given to Johnson in 1752, shortly after Tetty's death. Johnson had sent him to school, but later he ran away to join the Navy, though it was thought he had been a clerk rather than a seaman. But why did he do it? - asked Mr. Wain. The facts about Barber would go on a postcard - and provided he did not infringe the facts, he felt free to let his imagination range over Barber's life.

He gave first what he explained was the one and only public airing of the first draft of an opening scene that had already been discarded, since it was too long for radio, for which the play had now been commissioned. He then gave some extracts from the current draft, recast in a form representing the interior action of Frank's mind on the night of his death, using the voices of Levet and Miss Williams. This would show by the free use of flashback available in radio drama Frank's acceptance that Samuel Johnson loved him.

In thanking Mr. Wain, after an appreciative discussion, the Chairman said that Johnson's treatment of Frank was an attractive and touching side of his character. It was a privilege to be taken into Mr. Wain's confidence over his method of dealing with the subject.

S.B.S.P.

JOHN PHILLIPS — AN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY HATTER

John Phillips, hatter, of Bishop's Stortford, Herts, travelled the former All road between the village of Potter Street, Essex (now part of Harlow New Town) and Newport, Essex. His account book in the Hertfordshire Record Office shows that in 1768 he made a hat for Francis Barber, then being educated at Dr. Johnson's expense at Mrs. Clapp's Establishment in Bishop's Stortford.

Mrs. Clapp was the widow of the Rev. J. Clapp, headmaster of the school from 25th May 1764 till his death in November 1767. The Rev. R. Fowler succeeded on 1st December 1767 until resigning in 1769. Phillips also made a hat for the Rev. Mr. Fowler at Mrs. Clapp's. Both are referred to in Johnson's letter to Francis Barber dated May 28, 1768:

Dear Francis,

I have been very much out of order. I am glad to hear that you are well, and design to come soon to see you. I would have you stay at Mrs. Clapp's for the present, till I can determine what we shall do. Be a good boy.

My compliments to Mrs. Clapp and to Mr. Fowler. I am,

Yours affectionately,

SAM JOHNSON

The house, Tudor with a Georgian frontage, which was Mrs. Clapp's Establishment still exists and is situated in Windhill, Bishop's Stortford next to the Parish Church of St. Michael. For many years past it has been a Monastery of the Redemptorist Fathers.

Photostats of the entries from John Phillips' account book are reproduced below by courtesy of the Hertfordshire Record Office and the County Archivist. Our thanks, too, to our own member, Miss Ursula Pye of Bishop's Stortford, for supplying the details.

<i>March 25</i>	<i>1768</i>	<i>Mr. Clapp's 2 hats</i>
<i>The Rev. Mr Fowler at</i>		<i>0-10-6</i>
<i>Mrs Clappes a hatt byed</i>	<i>June 16</i>	<i>Mr Barber at</i>
<i>Lined with Talby Buckle Band</i>		<i>Mrs Clappes a hatt</i>
<i>0-2-10</i>		<i>0-8-6</i>

LICHFIELD: THE GLORY WITHOUT THE POWER

Ross Wilson, MA, MTh

To what truly Johnsonian outbursts of rage and exasperation should we be treated were The Doctor to be miraculously translated back to his native city of Lichfield? Lichfield, a city, county of a city, and municipal borough in the Lichfield parliamentary division of Staffordshire, is no more. Lichfield, proud of its long, predominantly ecclesiastical history, of its celebrated three-spired cathedral - the restoration of the central one is attributed to Sir Christopher Wren after the havoc of the Civil War - 'the mother of the Midlands', is no more a city.

Lichfield lies now in an administrative limbo. The need is for another miracle similar to that in which Lord Brooke, notorious for his hostility to the church, was killed during the parliamentary taking of the city in 1643 by a bullet deflected on St. Chad's day - an accident welcomed as a miracle by the Royalists. Incidentally, the cathedral close yielded and was retaken by Prince Rupert in that same year, but in the breakdown of the King's cause in 1646 it had again to surrender. If the cathedral suffered terribly in those wars, the city has now suffered the final degradation. It is no longer a city. What is its status? Is it - what? Thus the expression that it has been cast into Limbo, the haunt of lost souls, the depository of past glories ...

Since that muddle-headed, disastrous reorganisation of local government in 1974, Lichfield has had no local council of its own - an embarrassment and insulting annoyance to a community whose charter alone dates back to 1548 and whose county status to 1553. (Going a little further back, after the foundation of the see by St. Chad in 669, it was raised in 786 by Pope Adrian through the influence of Offa, King of Mercia, to the dignity of an archbishopric, but in 803 the primacy was restored to Canterbury).

But now, Lichfield District Council, into which many of the powers of the old city council were subsumed in the reorganisation of local government, has to cater for a much wider area of 88,000 inhabitants, as against Lichfield City's 25,000. But in fairness, the District Council has not been neglectful of the most critical problem facing the (former) city: how to preserve its ancient character while creating work for its people.

Lichfield needs, like the giant West Midlands conurbation to which it is so dangerously close, to attract industry. The area's unemployment rate is tending to move above its current 5.8 per cent compared with Birmingham's 5.7 per cent and Wolverhampton's 6.4 per cent.

Lichfield itself is close to the northern limit of the green belt which surrounds the conurbation and which is an essential aid in its fight to keep the Jekyll of historical beauty apart from the Hyde of modern development.

Mr. Paul Farrow, the District Council's deputy director of planning - we can imagine the Doctor's scorn of such high-faluting and nonsensical titles and functions - claims, not unnaturally, considerable success for Lichfield in this respect. The Eastern Avenue Industrial Estate has, since the early 1960's, helped both in attracting companies from the Black Country and elsewhere in Britain, and in relocating factories from the older part of the city.

There are still one or two plants which it would be wise to move - a foundry remains in the old sector, for example - but considerable tidying-up has been achieved. Lichfield is relatively unscarred for a place which has undergone transition from a centre for brewing, malting, flax spinning, coach building, and paper making, to a city with various modern industries, notably engineering and construction.

'The green belt does not inhibit economic development' said Mr. Farrow. A new 42-acre industrial estate is being built by a private consortium, and among the applicants for a place in it is a large multi-national group seeking room for an office development.

Lichfield's success has been achieved mostly with small companies, but the larger combines have not been entirely absent. Enots, a hydraulic control equipment company is part of IMI, while Bound Brook, a metal components manufacturer on the nearby Trent Valley Road, belongs to GKN.

Lichfield also enjoys several advantages. The migration of a number of people from the Black Country to the cathedral city has resulted in a high incidence of skilled labour. Further, it is on the main London to Manchester railway line and is, by road, only twenty minutes from Birmingham's 'spaghetti junction'.

Lichfield enjoys also the safety valve of proximity to Birmingham and Wolverhampton. It is able to accommodate a number of inhabitants for whom it does not need to provide work. All these factors, according to Mr. Farrow, have enabled it to achieve a better balance than many green belt communities.

The (former) city is not ungrateful for this, but definitely is unhappy because, while achieving distinction in industrial development, it has suffered the indignity of losing what administrative autonomy it previously had. Lichfield has always been able to take a joke against itself. It was formerly known as the 'city of the three P's' - pubs,

parsons and prostitutes - from the days when it was the original home of the Staffordshire Regiment. But many feel deeply that the political situation is beyond a joke.

The old city council had wide-ranging powers. Now the charter trustees - the 15 councillors from the city who sit on the 58-member District Council - have no power to levy a rate, to employ staff directly, or to own property. The city's lovely old Guildhall belongs to the District.

Mr. Bob Blewitt, a Lichfield District Councillor, is Chairman of the Association of Charter Trustees, a body representing many towns which were not only deprived of their old councils in 1974, but also denied the successor Parish Councils granted to surrounding village communities. He is deeply unhappy about the fate of Lichfield: 'We have rates levied directly, in addition to the district rate, for duties supposedly carried out within this city. We should have our own elected council to take charge of it rather than have it disappear into the coffers of the district,' he said.

Consultation on planning matters, which the surrounding Parish Councils have as a right, is granted to Lichfield only as a concession.

But along with other charter trustee towns, Lichfield is launching an attempt to salvage some of its pride. The guidelines of the 1974 local government reorganisation prevented many towns with more than 20,000 inhabitants, or which made up more than one-fifth of the population of the district, from being given a successor Parish or Town Council. For the Boundary Commission's parish review, that restriction has been altered and Lichfield and many other towns are applying for their own councils. But even if they are successful, things would never be the same. Parish Councils' powers are far from mighty for a place which was, between 786 and 803, the seat of an archbishopric stretching from the Thames to the Humber, and has been the seat of a bishopric (apart from a period shortly after the Norman Conquest) since 669.

What, think you, would The Doctor make of it all?

